

*Washington
Park
Arboretum
Bulletin*

Published by
the Arboretum
Foundation

Spring 2001

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Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin
Published quarterly by the Arboretum Foundation
for the Washington Park Arboretum

Washington Park Arboretum

The Arboretum is a 230-acre living museum displaying internationally renowned collections of oaks, conifers, camellias, Japanese maples, hollies and a profusion of woody plants from the Pacific Northwest and around the world. Aesthetic enjoyment gracefully co-exists with science in this spectacular urban green space on the shores of Lake Washington. Visitors come to learn, explore, relax or reflect in Seattle's largest public garden.

The Washington Park Arboretum is managed cooperatively by the University of Washington and Seattle Parks and Recreation; the Arboretum Foundation is its major support organization.

Graham Visitors Center

Open 10 AM—4 PM daily;
holidays, 12 NOON—4 PM.
Closed Thanksgiving and the Friday after,
Christmas and New Year's Day.

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The Arboretum Foundation is a nonprofit organization established in 1935 to ensure stewardship for the Washington Park Arboretum, and to provide horticultural leadership for the region. The Foundation provides funding and volunteer support for the maintenance, development and renovation of Arboretum gardens and collections and for education programs. Volunteers operate the gift shop, conduct major fund-raising events, and further their gardening knowledge through study groups and hands-on work in the greenhouse or grounds.

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ABOVE: The early-blooming quince, *Chaenomeles x superba* 'Cameo', with profuse, fluffy double, peach-pink blossoms may be seen in the Arboretum near the Visitors Center and at map coordinates 1S-4E.

ON THE COVER: *Cornus kousa* var. *chinensis* 'Milky Way' is one of The Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden's first Great Plant Picks (see p. 9). Resistant to diseases that attack *Cornus florida*, 'Milky Way' has abundant white flowers in June followed by red fruit in late summer and scarlet leaves in autumn. Older trees have interesting, patchwork-patterned trunks. In the Arboretum, 'Milky Way' may be seen at grid coordinates 29-1W. (Great Plant Picks Photograph)

FROM THE Executive Director

Introducing “The Bulletin”

This was the headline on the first article of the very first issue of *The Arboretum Bulletin*, a pamphlet of only three pages, published in December, 1936. In his introduction, Hugo A. Winkenwerder, Ph.D. (WPA Acting Director, 1934–1938) described the mission of the new publication. He hoped to use the *Bulletin* to pass on “the variety of happenings and experiences” offered by the new Arboretum and to keep readers “informed of the progress of development of the Arboretum, of accessions of new seeds and plants, and special gifts.” The new publication also planned to carry announcements of blooming times of special plants and of lectures being offered.

Sixty-five years later, the *Bulletin* thrives. It has evolved into a 32-page color publication with many contributing writers. It focuses on educating the reader about plants in the Arboretum, whether new accessions or fine

examples of plants for the Northwest. It encourages us to take what we have learned into our own gardens. During its existence, the *Bulletin* has evolved, becoming increasingly scientific, always well respected, and certainly most beloved.

Lee Neff begins her editorship with this issue. She brings a fresh enthusiasm for the *Bulletin* and for the Arboretum. Her personal garden receives glowing reviews from all who visit. As you read the article written by Lee, you will feel her passion for gardening and have a sense of the person now entrusted with one of the Arboretum’s institutions. We welcome Lee Neff and look forward to her guidance.



Deborah Andrews, Executive Director
Arboretum Foundation

The Arboretum’s *Magnolia x soulangeana* ‘Lennei’ blooming in April
with large, elegantly cupped, dark pink flowers.





John A. Wott, Ph.D.

The cones of the western white pine (*Pinus monticola*) change from purple-green when young to yellow-brown when mature.

THE PINETUM—

A Core Collection within Prominent Parkland

One of the lesser-visited areas of the Washington Park Arboretum is the Pinetum, located on the Arboretum's western perimeter. To find the Pinetum, one walks west from the Graham Visitors Center across the Wilcox Bridge and then heads south. For many years, this area was sorely neglected, and weedy species invaded. In 1997, we decided it was time to revitalize this part of the Arboretum. It contains most of our outstanding collection of pines (*Pinus*) and is the primary location of a large number of other conifers. It is also a favorite walk of a number of the Arboretum's neighbors. In the new master plan, pines are identified as one of the Arboretum's core collections—featured taxonomic groups, as

diverse as the constraints of this climate permit.

The Pinetum is a mini-arboretum within the Arboretum. It is invaluable as an educational asset as well as a contemplative retreat. But many of the trees have declined due to overcrowding, and some specimens are even dying of old age. Recent storms have also damaged a number of older specimens. The lightning strike on *Pinus engelmannii* a few years ago brought fire trucks to the scene when neighbors thought the tree was on fire. Sadly, the top has now fallen.

The long-term goal is to rejuvenate the Pinetum, keeping the concentration of pine trees on the central rise, while surrounding it with specimens of other conifers. By doing

major work now, the newly planted pines will give us an uneven age stand for many years to come. A large, diverse collection of this type will take annual attention.

In 1997, we began by removing hazardous and diseased trees. Neighbors helped on a campaign to eradicate invasive ivy and brambles. As areas were cleared, we were able to plant new pines of known origin. Several of those are already showing a degree of grand elegance. At first some neighbors were skeptical, but after seeing the results, they were delighted with the new open, friendly area and wanted us to do more.

In 1999, the Arboretum Foundation used its semi-annual appeal to raise over \$10,000 to help begin extensive renovations to the Pinetum. The major work was done during the spring and summer of 2000, and the planting of new pines took place this past fall. Our staff views this as an on-going project which will continue for many years. It is also indicative of the type of project envisioned in the master plan: renovation of an existing collection while making it much more accessible and park-like.

The first step when renovating an old collection is to find out what we have—as well as what we don't have. This job fell to our Registrar/Collections Manager, Randall Hitchin. To assist Randall, we were fortunate to hire Angie Cahill, a Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH) undergraduate, to work full time on this project last summer. Her job was to check all our conifer records, get out the maps and verify which plants were actually still in existence, and then see if she could find them. After that, she had to decide if the plant really was what we thought it was. Angie checked over 700 plants in the Pinetum and the Conifer Meadow, just north of the Pinetum, walking over 76 grids, nearly 20 acres. She found that the area had 357 accessions representing 300 taxa. Eventually, Angie even found 36 threatened or endangered plants.

This area is also home to our "Dan Evans Redwood" and includes specimens of

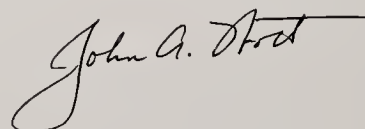
Juniperus, *Abies*, *Picea*, *Sequoiadendron*, *Metasequoia*, *Sequoia*, *Taxodium*, *Cupressus*, *Chamaecyparis*, *Thuja*, x *Cupressocyparis*, *Larix*, *Tsuga*, *Araucaria*, *Taxus*, *Calocedrus*, *Scaidopitys*, and *Cunninghamia*. It is a favorite place for teaching conifers. And in winter, it is a great place to enjoy early morning frosts and even that first snow.

Checking all those plants was a huge job; Angie was assisted in plant identification and plant condition reports by the curation staff. Once she had checked and double-checked the data, she entered all of this information into Arboretum databases. This information will be invaluable for years to come as decisions are made about which plants to remove or what to add.

Last fall, the grounds crew, under the capable direction of Arboretum Horticulturist Christina Pfeiffer removed 27 trees, all old, diseased, or of little collection value. After the removal, the crew ground the stumps, spread chips and improved the soil throughout the area. Finally, Christina and Polly Hankin, landscape architect, held a public open house to explain the changes to interested visitors.

During the late fall, 25 new pines, which had been growing in the Arboretum nursery at Union Bay, were planted in the Pinetum. There is room for another five or six, which will be added as the seedlings mature. Before long, the rejuvenation of the Pinetum will be celebrated with an open house.

There is still more work to be done on the west side of the Arboretum. The Conifer Meadow needs major attention, and the Pinetum work needs to continue southward with new pathways and interpretation. In the meantime, when you need a special place for reflection, why not find your way to the Arboretum's Pinetum? ~



John A. Wott, Director
Washington Park Arboretum

HORT 101

Test your horticultural vocabulary with these terms used in this issue!

ACCESSION, (ak sesh'ən) noun

Something added. An acquisition or item added to a collection. An accession could be an envelope of a seed, a batch of cuttings or an individual plant. Each accession acquired by the Arboretum is given an accession number that might be something like 55-47. The two digits following the hyphen indicate the year in which the accession came to the Arboretum. The number before the hyphen indicates this plant's number in the sequence of acquisitions of that year. Therefore, the accession above would be the 55th acquisition of 1947.

ENDANGERED & THREATENED PLANTS

The Washington Natural Heritage Program publishes a list of Washington state plants which are considered "Endangered, Threatened, Sensitive, Possibly Extirpated from or Extinct in Washington."

"Endangered" is the category of species that may become "extinct or extirpated in Washington within the near future if factors contributing to its decline continue. Populations of these taxa are at critically low levels or their habitats have been degraded or depleted to a significant degree." A threatened plant could become endangered "if factors contributing to its population decline or habitat degradation or loss continue."

Similar lists are published nationally and internationally.

PICOTEE, (pīk ō tē') adjective

Describes a flower narrowly edged in a color that contrasts with its ground color.

TAXON, (tak'son) noun, pl. TAXA (tak'sə)

A named group of organisms, such as a genus or species, that is defined by a set of shared characteristics. TAXONOMY: *The technique or science of classification*

SEED PARENT & POLLEN PARENT

When hybridizers cross two plants, they choose one plant to provide pollen and one to receive the pollen and form seed. Whether a plant becomes a seed or pollen parent may be determined by many factors including observation and speculation, and whether or when a plant produces pollen. Some hybridizers feel that the characteristics of seed parents seem more dominant than those of pollen parents, so seed parents may be chosen in hopes of seeing particular characteristics in the offspring. Pollen can also be stored in a refrigerator or freezer, so pollen can be collected from a plant blooming at a different time from the seed parent.

SEPAL, (sē'pəl) noun

A flower part that usually encloses and protects the flower bud. Usually it is green and smaller than petals, but sometimes it is colorful and petal-like.

VOUCHER SPECIMEN

A pressed, mounted plant specimen which serves as a permanent record and reference for an accession in a botanical garden or a plant found in the wild. Voucher specimens are labeled with the collection date and locality, collector's name, and other pertinent information. They provide an easily accessed resource for the identification of plants.



Mrs. Grinstead's Legacy

BY LEE C. NEFF

We knew we had a mystery on our hands when our good friend, who had lived in Seattle all his life, remarked, "My that's a large eastern white pine!" For only a week earlier, shortly after we had moved to this new garden, a knowledgeable visitor from the East Coast had muttered, "Hmm.... That must be a western white pine, although it sure looks different from others I have seen. It's certainly not an eastern white pine. Big, though."

By this time, we knew we had purchased someone's well-loved garden. Our new neighbor, Lucy Mitchell, had recited its

history, adding, "They say that the people who owned your home in the 1930s were among the founders of the Arboretum. I believe their name was Grinstead, or something like that."

It hadn't taken long to identify the fine, old Camperdown elm, the huge deodar cedars, the dying, weeping mountain ash, 20-foot tall 'Harry Lauder's Walking Stick', and several beautiful magnolias. We knew enough to be respectful of the gardener who had planted them, but we didn't know the name of the pine with the huge cones at the entrance to our property.



◀ In the background, the Himalayan white pine (*Pinus wallichiana*) with mature, female cones over a foot long, stands behind a Camperdown elm (*Ulmus glabra* 'Camperdownii'). Both were planted by Mrs. Loren Grinstead in the late 1930s. There are several examples of these trees in the Arboretum.

▲ An immature, green, banana-shaped cone of the Himalayan white pine. Its silvery-green needles are borne in clusters of five.

Our first thought, to ask the family from whom we had purchased the property, didn't solve the puzzle, but they did add, "It must be an interesting tree. Some official from the Arboretum rode over on his bike last year to measure it." Hmmm.... A second mention of the Arboretum. So I picked up the phone.

"An Arboretum official? Measuring trees? Not to my knowledge. Perhaps it was Arthur Lee Jacobson. He gets around on a bike. If it's an important tree, he would surely have discovered it."

Well! An "important tree"! That made everything different. With his *Trees of Seattle*

(Sasquatch Books, 1989) in hand, I immediately called Arthur Lee Jacobson. I described, as best I could, exactly where I lived and what the tree looked like. He queried, "Do its needles come in bundles of five?" I didn't know.

"Well, he said, it sounds as if you have that old Himalayan white pine—the first one listed in the book; I think it's the oldest in the state. Why don't you take a cone and a bunch of needles and go compare it to one in the Arboretum?"

So that's just what I did. Jacobson writes in *Trees of Seattle*, the Himalayan white pine (*Pinus wallichiana*) is "A companion of Deodar Cedar in the mighty Himalayan valleys. Quite like Eastern White Pine but wider, with larger cones and longer, droopy needles. Old examples are rare here, young ones uncommon." And the first listing adds that a 67-foot tall, 58-foot wide specimen "is in a SE Seattle yard (exact address withheld because people keep stealing its cones)".

Next were listings of the trees' locations in the Arboretum, so I took a bundle of needles (five, as Jacobson thought) and a cone (13" long) and drove to the Visitors Center. A volunteer pointed me in the right direction. It wasn't long before the mystery was solved. Jubilant, I went off to announce my victory, full of pride at owning a "rare" tree.

But taking care of such a treasure is humbling. When we moved to this property, the pine was noosed by a circular, asphalt driveway. The tree's repeated attempts to push its roots up through the asphalt made it clear that it was uncomfortable with this situation. So we took up the asphalt and created a more forgiving drive of gravel.

A few years later, the pine's largest, heaviest branch crashed to the ground on a windless day. Since its top had blown off in Seattle's 1962 windstorm, five competing branches had endeavored to form "tops", themselves at risk in high winds. So our treasure is regularly visited by a knowledgeable arborist who, for the safety of both tree and gardener, has

cabled its brittle, vulnerable limbs and tops securely.

Still, the question of who planted our pine remained. It wasn't until I was lucky enough to become the Editor of the *Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin* that it occurred to me to wonder more earnestly about the mythical Grinsteads.

Fortuitously, my tour of Arboretum facilities included the basement files where old issues of *The Arboretum Bulletin*, as it was then called, are stored. I plunked on the floor to explore a few early issues, and there, on the yellowing front page of Volume I, No. 3, dated May, 1937, was an article by Mrs. Loren Grinstead. It began, "The Chairman of the

**"Why don't
you take a cone
and a bunch
of needles
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compare it
to one in the
Arboretum?"**



Acquisitions Committee of the Arboretum Foundation wishes to take this opportunity to express appreciation for the many gifts of plants made during the past year and for the interest many individuals, Garden Clubs and others are showing in looking forward to an opportunity to sponsor special projects."

Chairman of the Acquisitions Committee! No wonder, and how blessed we are. Mrs. Grinstead and her husband lived and gardened here from 1938 to 1944. But their imagination remains. It is only fitting, now, to "take this opportunity

to express appreciation for the many gifts of plants made during the past...." Thank you, Mrs. Grinstead, for your legacy. ~

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▲ GREAT PLANT PICKS



▲ BRIGGS NURSERY



▲ JANET LOUGHREY

Picking Great Plants

BY RICHARD W. HARTLAGE

Did you attend the Northwest Flower & Garden Show this year? If so, you may have seen the Miller Garden's "Great Plant Picks" display.

As you undoubtedly noticed, the first fifteen Great Plant Picks have been chosen. As we move forward, we will make at least fifteen further picks each year.

How did this new venture begin? Over two years ago, Dick Turner, Editor of *Pacific Horticulture*, and I were talking about horticultural programs for the West Coast. He casually mentioned the idea of a plant awards

program for the region and that he hoped it could include the entire coast.

Days later I still couldn't get my mind off the idea, so I called for information on several East Coast efforts, including the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Gold Medal Plant Awards program. It quickly became apparent that the idea was a good one but that the entire West Coast was too large and climatically diverse to tackle. It made more sense to narrow the program to encompass the maritime Pacific Northwest, from Eugene, Oregon, north to southern British Columbia, west of the Cascade Mountains.

▲ Left: The blue-needled, Japanese white pine (*Pinus parviflora* f. *glauca*) is slow-growing and produces lots of cones.

▲ Center: The *Rhododendron* 'Ken Janeck' is a compact plant with soft pink, mid-spring blooms and hairy indumentum on new growth.

▲ Right: This unusually long-leaved lungwort, *Pulmonaria longifolia* ssp. *cevennensis*, flowers from late winter through late spring and sports silver-mottled leaves that enliven shady sites.

The more I thought about a plant awards program, the more excited I became, for it beautifully complements the mission of the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden. Mrs. Miller was keenly interested in plants, and she spent a lifetime experimenting, learning about, and promoting plant diversity in the region. This would be an opportunity to

● TREES AND CONIFERS

- *Acer griseum* (Paperbark Maple)
- *Acer japonicum* 'Aconitifolium' (Fernleaf Full Moon Maple)
- *Cornus kousa* var. *chinensis* 'Milky Way' (Milky Way Dogwood)
- *Crataegus* x *lavalleei* (Lavalle Hawthorn)
- *Pinus parviflora* f. *glauca* (Blue-Needled Japanese White Pine)

SHRUBS & VINES

- *Corylopsis pauciflora* (Buttercup Winter Hazel)
- *Fothergilla gardenii* (all forms) (Dwarf Fothergilla)
- *Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Snow Queen' (Snow Queen Oak-Leaved Hydrangea)
- *Rhododendron* 'Ken Janeck'
- *Schizophragma hydrangeoides* 'Moonlight' (Moonlight Japanese Hydrangea Vine)

PERENNIALS

- *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty' (Moerheim Beauty Sneezeweed)
- *Helleborus foetidus* (Stinking Hellebore)
- *Nepeta racemosa* 'Walker's Low' (Walker's Low Catmint)
- *Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens' (Black Mondo Grass)
- *Pulmonaria longifolia* ssp. *cevenensis* (Longleaf Lungwort)

continue her interest and legacy in the regional horticultural community.

No doubt about it, my enthusiasm needed a reality check. I drove to the Eastside and headed for Wells Medina Nursery where I found Ned Wells wandering around in his usual determined but trying-to-do-many-things-at-once way, tidying a bed, straightening plants and answering customers' questions all at the same time. I waited patiently, and when it was my turn, told him what I was thinking. He thought a moment and responded, "Brilliant idea!"

In July, 2000, the Miller Botanical Garden Board of Directors approved the program, and the Pendleton and Elisabeth Miller Charitable Foundation granted funding. A dream was coming true.

Three weeks later we hired Linda Plato, a former Miller Garden intern and graduate of Edmonds Community College. Together, she and I began to write the policies and parameters to make the program work. Linda came up with the name: Great Plant Picks. I loved it immediately; it was catchy and accessible to the gardener of average experience. We were launched at last!

How does it work?

To choose the plants, we asked a group of thirty of the region's most experienced professional horticulturists to become judges. They represent wholesale and retail nurseries as well as public gardens, and include Randall Hitchin, the Arboretum's Collections Manager/Registrar. All were selected for their long and direct experience with plants and their expansive, first-hand knowledge of how to choose the best plants for the region. Judges were selected from the whole region and, to make the task more manageable, were divided into three committees: Trees and Conifers, Shrubs and Vines, and Perennials and Bulbs.

The goal: to create a list of plants that are well adapted to the climate, easy to grow, disease- and pest-resistant, and have excellent ornamental qualities over a long season or

multiple seasons. Judges made their initial choices by generating lists of appropriate plants and winnowing those lists to the very best. During September and October, 2000, the committees' first picks were finalized.

Judges also visit comprehensive collections of plants for direct comparative evaluation. For example, the Shrub and Vine Committee met in late January to evaluate the witch hazel collections at Gossler Farms Nursery in Springfield, Oregon, and at the Washington Park Arboretum. Eventually, comprehensive private collections will be sought out as well.

From time to time we will appoint temporary judges to assist with evaluations. I can think of gardeners with expansive knowledge of clematis or cyclamen or rhododendrons, for example, who can help the committees choose Great Plant Picks in a more informed manner.

Soon, we will begin publishing lists of the genera being evaluated so growers can plan ahead to provide consumers with awarded plants. As the program builds and becomes more financially secure, we hope to coordinate on-going comparative trials, such as those at Wisley, England.

As we move forward, we will award more than fifteen plants per year, so, in ten years, we anticipate there will be more than 2,000 Great Plant Picks. At that point we will start over again, re-evaluating the initial choices to see if they have been superseded by new and better selections.

So how do you find out more or suggest plants for consideration? Look us up on our Web site at www.greatplantpicks.org. You will find extensive descriptions of each of this year's Great Plant Picks as well as photographs, selection criteria and a list of judges. If you prefer, write us at Great Plant Picks, PO Box 77377, Seattle, WA 98177. Or call 206-363-4803, fax 206-363-4803 or e-mail Linda Plato, Program Coordinator, at lindap@millergarden.org.

We hope you are as excited about this new program as we are! Look for the Great Plant Picks logo at your local nurseries. ♪

SELECTION CRITERIA

Plants are selected in the following categories:

- **Trees and conifers**
- **Shrubs and vines**
- **Perennials and bulbs**

All plants should:

- **Be hardy in USDA zones 7 and 8**
- **Be long-lived**
- **Be vigorous and easy to grow by a gardener of average means and experience (plants requiring specialist knowledge should not be considered)**
- **Be reasonably disease- and pest-resistant**
- **Have long season of interest and preferably multiple seasons of interest**
- **Be available from at least two retail plant sources**
- **Be adaptable to a variety of soil and fertility conditions**
- **Not require excessive moisture (with the exception of aquatic plants)**
- **Not be invasive or overly vigorous in colonizing the garden or larger environment**

Perennials should be of good constitution and low in maintenance. Plants requiring staking, vigorous deadheading, etc., should not be considered.

Trees and shrubs should require little pruning and nominal training to achieve their best form (excluding plants used for hedges).

Bulbs should be considered long term perennials, lasting at least two years.

Variegated plants should be stable and not revert excessively.

Richard Hartlage is the Director/Curator of The Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden in north Seattle.



Honoring Seattle's Heritage Trees

BY CASS TURNBULL

In the last three decades, Seattle has lost over one-third of its trees. Those of us who have always lived here mourn the loss of empty lots and wooded ravines. Some of the best moments of our childhoods were spent exploring them. Although many green spaces have been gobbled up, statistics show that the increase in our population accounts for only a small portion of the land loss. Of more significance is the national trend for each person to occupy more and more space.

In addition, advances in technology mean that previously unbuildable lots can now be developed. Both the green hillsides and ravines

that acted as wildlife sanctuaries, and city greenbelts are now ringed by houses and apartments on stilts.

And too, the current obsession for water views has taken its toll on the urban forest canopy. Hundreds and probably thousands of large, healthy trees have been removed, one by one, to improve the view. It is hard to appreciate the cumulative loss. Surely this one tree is of little importance! But add them all up, and their removal has significant impact. The re-logging of Seattle's hillsides for views is a slow-motion juggernaut, silently transforming the landscape. The resulting loss of trees reflects poorly on us as an ecologically minded city.

Seattle's laws and budgets are insufficient for protecting trees, on either public or private property. Rather than continue the onerous process of trying to influence public policy, the Education/Advocacy Committee of PlantAmnesty began its own Heritage Tree Program in 1995. With no money and no legal mandate, we set out to at least start tracking and recognizing Seattle's special trees in hopes that they would not be wantonly cut down. In 1999 the City of Seattle became a program partner, providing staff support and a Web site. Very slowly, the program has grown to include thirteen Heritage Trees.

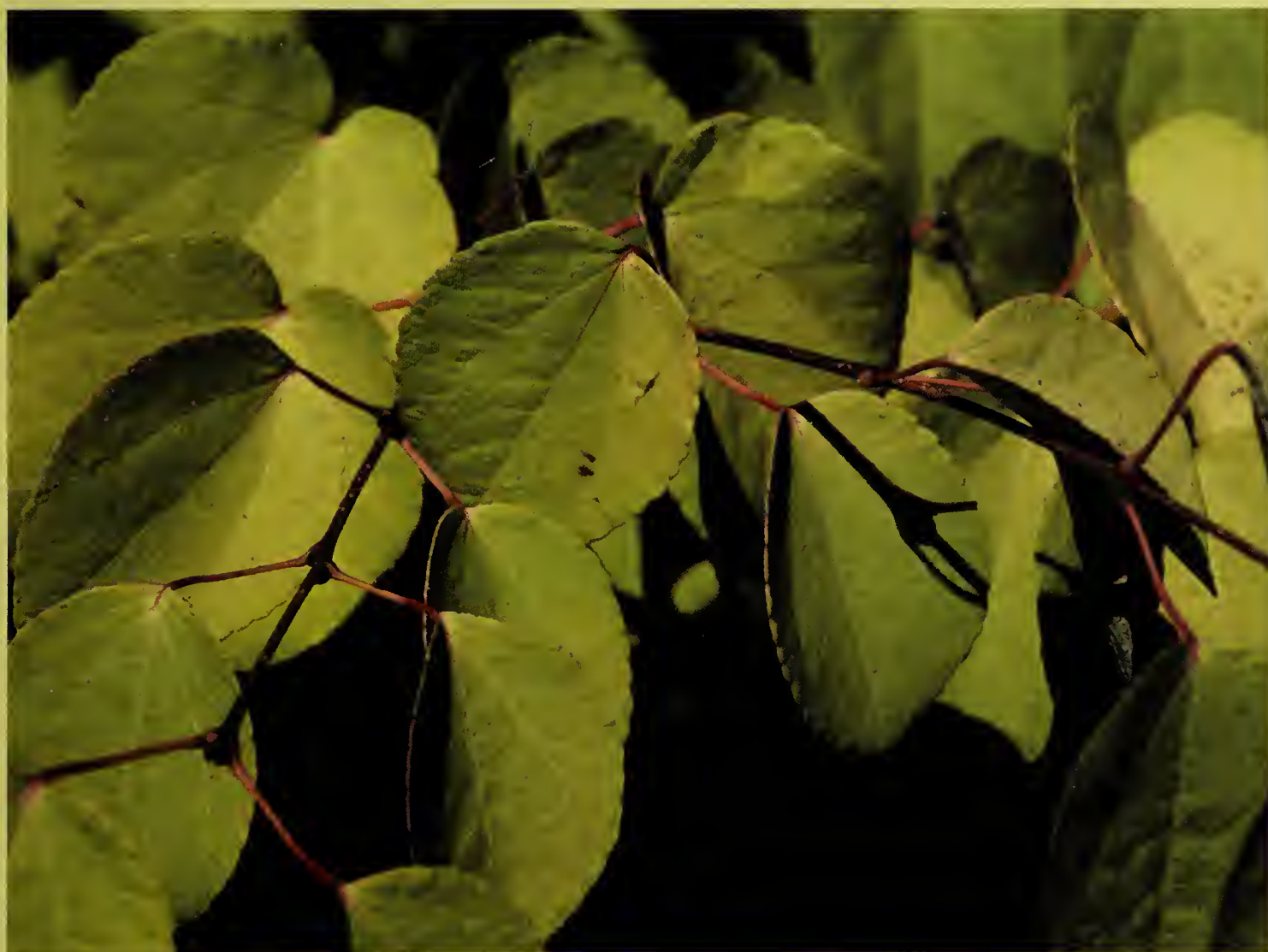
The Challenge

The Program's first task was to decide what criteria to use to choose trees. Many cities

accept trees of little arboricultural value, simply because they have strong advocates. Portland, boasting over 230 heritage trees in only seven years, put a moratorium on nominations. As one Portland city arborist said, "After putting the fifteenth red oak on the list, it stops having much meaning."

After reviewing other cities' systems for determining which trees were "significant," and trying to avoid pitfalls involving too much paperwork, we decided that the best way to choose trees was to put each nomination to the vote of a committee that would always be composed, at least in part, of "sophisticated" (discerning) tree lovers. For us, this means a certain number of International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certified arborists, with at least one who is a commercial arborist.

- ◀ The blossoms of the Oregon or western crabapple (*Malus fusca*), the largest specimen in Seattle.
- ▼ The leaves and red petioles of the Japanese katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*), the tallest in the state. Both trees pictured here will be celebrated in April.



Commercial arborists (of the tree-lover variety) see enough trees that they won't pass over a sickly looking, small, but rare tree; nor will they dismiss a specimen tree just because it is a native or a so-called "trash" tree.

Legal Protection

Our next job was to address property rights issues. How does one provide meaningful legal protection for trees without passing a law (which we can't do because we aren't a government) and without treading on people's property rights? Our answer was to make a voluntary, but legally binding, "conservation easement" available to the owners of significant trees. This conservation easement is a contract between the property owner and PlantAmnesty that grants us an interest in the tree and protects the tree from removal. The easement goes with the deed to the property so that all future owners know (before they buy) that there is a protected tree on the property. PlantAmnesty can then enforce the protective easement after the original owner and dedicator transfers the property to future owners.

Brian Todd and Mark McPherson of Hillis, Clark, Martin and Peterson graciously crafted the easement for PlantAmnesty, pro bono. (God bless them.) The start-up funding for the program came from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and the USDA Forest Service.

And what a thrill it was when 78-year-old Vivian McLean signed the first conservation easement to protect her grand black walnut in West Seattle. Tree history was being made! We lose trees one at a time; now we can save them, one at a time.

According to the conservation easement, if a future owner or neighbor of a protected Heritage Tree cuts it down (to divide the lot or improve the view), PlantAmnesty can seek damages that include triple the value of the tree, the amount the property appreciates because of the tree removal, and reasonable

attorney fees. Only in this way can we truly dissuade future evil doers from their dastardly deeds.

We were reminded recently that, indeed, special trees will be cut down, when we pleaded with the owner of a property in Ballard supporting the state's champion 'Shiro' plum tree—not a PlantAmnesty Heritage Tree, to spare the tree during the proposed redevelopment of the lot.

Sadly, the very next week the tree was cut down. Overnight, the tree was gone, the branches hauled off, the stump ground out, and all the plums, raked up and removed. This experience provided us with a startling preview of the future. We will, at some point, have to fight to protect Heritage Trees. Instead of a court battle becoming a drain on financial resources, the contract's provisions for legal remedy could mean the beginning of a healthy tree defense fund.

Nominations & Dedications

Getting nominations for Heritage Trees presented a different set of problems. Because of limited city and PlantAmnesty staff and resources, it has been hard to get the word out about our program. We wrongly assumed that our public Heritage Tree dedications would generate good media coverage, which would bring in nominations. Apparently, Heritage Tree celebrations, like tree planting events, hold no fascination for sophisticated media types.

Nevertheless, we always put on a good show at our public Heritage Tree dedications, including banners, balloons, and a decorated podium. Dignitaries wear hats—top hats, straw hats and bowlers—representing the era in which most Heritage Trees were planted. We drink a toast to the health of the tree. We have a walking forest (including 15-foot tall Marla the Maple) attending our dedications. The mayor said, as he dedicated a 300-year-old Douglas fir in Seward Park, "This is the first time I've taken a walk *with* the woods."

We've even hoisted City Council members up big trees, safely using arborists' rope and saddle technique. (One would think that reporters couldn't pass up the chance to use the words "out on a limb" in a headline!)

Our celebrations are a great way to educate and create interest among both citizens and Council members. Currently, we have two public dedications a year, one on Arbor Day in April and one in October, Urban Forestry Month, when many trees are in color.

In addition, we hold private ceremonies and dedications. In a private ceremony, the tree owner might send out invitations to friends and neighbors and provide refreshments. We provide the signage, the banner, and at least one "dignitary."

Some prefer that no fuss be made about their tree. They just want the designation and a plaque. We give them, as we give all Heritage Tree owners, a framed certificate (with the official embossed seal), an owner's manual, and the book, *City Among the Trees*, compliments of Seattle Transportation (Seatran), as well as an etched stone and bronze plaque made by the Cleveland High School foundry. All trees get listed in the Official Heritage Tree Registry and on the city's Web site: www.cityofseattle.net/td/plantamnes.asp.

The Arboretum: A Collection

After receiving a nomination for a tree in the Washington Park Arboretum, the committee set about determining what to do when one area contains so many candidates that it is hard to single any one out. After meeting with the Arboretum staff, it was agreed that we could simply call the Washington Park Arboretum a Collection of Heritage Trees. This designation also might work for other areas with numerous Heritage Trees, such as the Hiram Chittenden Locks' Carl English Gardens. In this way, the garden as a whole is recognized as having special plants, but no other restrictions are placed upon it. Arboretum Director John Wott and

the Arboretum staff were enthusiastic about the program and offered to let us host a celebration of three of their many special trees this coming Washington State Arbor Day, Wednesday, April 11. All are invited. Please join us at the Graham Visitors Center at 11:00 a.m.

If the weather is cooperative, Arthur Lee Jacobson, author of *Trees of Seattle* will lead us to the first of three trees to be celebrated, a native western crabapple (*Malus fusca*). This particular tree is the largest of its kind in the city. Then we will visit the other two trees, a Montezuma pine (*Pinus montezumae* var. *lindleyi*) from Mexico (one of only two in Seattle), and the tallest Japanese katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*) in the state. If the weather is inclement, Jacobson will present his popular slideshow: "America's Top Forty Trees."

The cooperative partnership between PlantAmnesty and the Arboretum is good news for Seattle's trees. PlantAmnesty hopes to share its Heritage Trees slideshow with many community groups and Arboretum Units. Arboretum members may ultimately play a critical role in nominating and sponsoring Heritage Trees. It would be only fitting.

I am reminded of a plaque inscription dedicating a grove of heritage trees in Auckland, New Zealand. To paraphrase slightly, "When we plant here, let us think that we plant forever. Let it not be for present delight or present use alone. Let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for. And let us think that a time is to come when these trees will be held sacred because our hands have planted them, and people will say as they look upon the wonder and the substance of them, 'See this our forbears did for us.'" ~

Cass Turnbull is founder and Executive Director of PlantAmnesty. Her books, lectures and activism benefit trees and woody plants throughout the United States. Contact Cass at 206-783-9813.

The Rum

EARLY RHODODENDRON HYBR

BY GWEN BELL

Turn on your imagination....Try to picture a 1930s house. Look through the window. In one room we can see a large table laden with a mountain of food. There appear to be about a dozen men seated around it. Can you hear the rumble and hum of male voices? The occasional shouts of laughter? From the kitchen, sounds are more subdued, the softer voices of women. There is a clatter of dishes and cooking utensils, and wafting over all, the delicious aroma of food.

Now it seems the men have satisfied their stomachs. They withdraw eagerly to the parlor to begin a meeting of the RumDum Club: a group of rhododendron hybridizers from the Puget Sound region of Washington state. There is serious, loud and emotional debate going on here. It's rhododendron talk!

In the parlor, I think I see that quiet nurseryman, ex-Norwegian, Endre Ostbo. He is a

Rhododendron 'Creamy Chiffon' (below), hybridized by Bill Whitney, and *R.* 'Skookumchuck' (right), hybridized by Hjalmar Larson, have been included in the Arboretum's new Puget Sound Rhododendron Hybrid Garden.



Dum Club

DIZERS OF THE PUGET SOUND



charter member of the American Rhododendron Society and a winner of their prestigious Gold Medal. His plant nursery is sited near one of the main roads leading into Bellevue. Next to him, the crusty loner and serious student, Lester

Brandt. He owns and operates a rhododendron nursery located about half way between Seattle and Tacoma. Ah, there's Bill Whitney, nurseryman and hybridizer, who has driven more than fifty miles from Brinnon, on the

Puget Sound Rhododendron Hybrid Garden

BY RANDALL HITCHIN

Since the late 1930s plantsmen from the Pacific Northwest, regarded by some as the best rhododendron growing region in the United States, have produced and named more than 2,000 hybrid rhododendrons. In an effort to highlight introductions from hybridizers in the Puget Sound region, the Arboretum has established its new Puget Sound Rhododendron Hybrid Garden.

Plantings in this garden are divided into three time periods. The first is the Early Era, featuring plants introduced from the 1940s through the 1960s. The Middle Era includes introductions of the 1970s and 80s, and the Contemporary Era starts with the 1990s. It is the intent of the garden to show visitors some of the best rhododendrons for personal garden use and, at the same time, to serve as a tribute to the work (and fun) of local plantsmen. In many ways, this new garden is the legacy of the RumDum Club and the enthusiastic hybridizers who have followed in their footsteps.

Without doubt, *Rhododendron* is one of the single most important genera in the collections of the Arboretum, which currently holds 701 kinds of rhododendrons, including 188 species and 513 hybrids. At this time, the Puget Sound Rhododendron Hybrid Garden contains 78 cultivars, including

six cultivars and species in the Roman Memorial Planting.

In the late 1970s an American Rhododendron Hybrid Garden was planted on this same site. But by the mid-1990s, as the plants aged and the tree canopy began to change, it was time to renovate this prominent garden along Azalea Way. The Arboretum Foundation generously donated \$25,000 to the project. Led by the University of Washington staff, a plan was developed and work began in 1997. The generosity of the Puget Sound Hybridizers and their many members contributed both ideas for improvement and plants. It was with great pleasure that this new garden was dedicated on Sunday, May 14, 2000.

The Puget Sound remains a center of rhododendron hybridization, and there is no doubt that breeders in this region will introduce many new and exciting hybrids in the years to come. Among possible advances are hybrids with greater cold hardiness, white-flowered hybrids, unusual flower shapes, flower colors that are not commonly found during the early blooming season, and plants that bloom in June and July. Who knows where the future will lead?

Randall Hitchin is the Registrar and Collections Manager for the Washington Park Arboretum.

Hood Canal, to attend this meeting. He will also receive a Gold Medal.

Across the room, I think I see the smiling Tacoma nurseryman, Hjalmar Larson. He delights in selling quantities of rhododendron seed to gardeners here and abroad. Another Gold Medal winner. Do you hear a strong Scandinavian accent? It's Halfdan Lem, host for the evening. He is an avid creator of new rhododendrons, a teller of tall tales and a man justifiably proud of his Gold Medal. Some of those faces almost lost in shadow belong to Ben Nelson, Ernest Anderson, Karl Sifferman, Don McClure and Harry Madison.

Hidden Treasure

Members of the RumDum Club and hybridizers around the country might be thought of as 'treasure seekers', for to them visions of future rhododendrons seemed far more challenging and more interesting than the rhododendrons of the past. These men did not become wealthy, but they had fun. They were not particularly scientific, but perhaps that made their passion more compelling. It must be remembered that sometimes it took as long as twenty years for a fine new hybrid to be selected, tested, propagated and made available to the gardening public. There was no tissue culture in those days.

The members of the RumDum Club were nurserymen in a relatively modest way, but they were enthusiastic hybridizers. All of them worked to widen the range of color in their flowers, to make bi-colors or picotees, or to double the flowers. They discussed breeding to improve foliage and plant habit and, of course, to increase hardiness. They were aware that gardens were shrinking and that slow-growing or low-growing plants might become more useful. The merits of early bloomers and late bloomers were argued. Such debate could grow heated. There was humor, too. Some of their goals were achieved; some were not.

Now the volatile, imaginative and active hybridizers (one of their wives called them

"characters") of that generation are gone. But it is important for today's gardeners to realize that their experimentation and search for the unusual resulted in a huge gene pool for followers to use in the quest for superior rhododendrons.

Alley Cat

Lest you think that each cross that these men made produced something special, think again. One day, Endre Ostbo was arranging a display in a Seattle rhododendron show. Some judges strolled by, and one of them noticed that a plant in the exhibit did not have a label. They informed Mr. Ostbo that, according to the rules, each rhododendron in the show had to have a nametag or recorded parentage. Ostbo protested, saying that the plant was blooming for the first time and he didn't know its parents. The judges insisted.

Mr. Ostbo thought for a moment and then said, "Well, let's just call it 'Alley Cat'."

It is amusing to know that that plant won an award that day! It would be nice to learn that 'Alley Cat' also proved to be exceptional. Unfortunately, it did not. As it matured, it developed such bad plant habit that neither pinching nor pruning helped. I doubt that you can find that 'Alley Cat' anywhere in the Northwest today.

Indignation

There are many stories of RumDum Club members' impatience with ignorant visitors. One day, many years ago, a Tacoma garden club was expected to tour Lester Brandt's nursery. As the chattering ladies walked up the drive, Lester Brandt stood near the wide-open gate, relaxed, his arms atop his long-handled shovel. In her excitement, one of the visitors reached over the fence and picked a rhododendron truss. Anger flared immediately, and Mr. Brandt vigorously shoved the gate closed, announcing in a loud voice that he did not welcome guests to his garden

continued on page 30



PRESERVING ARBORETUM PLANTS FOREVER:

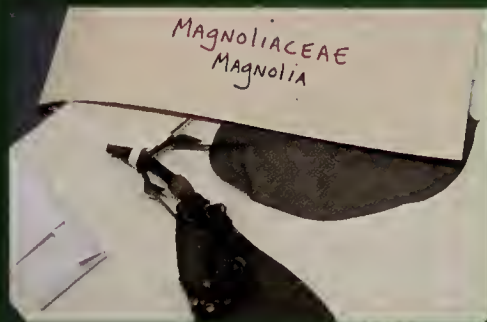
The Otis Douglas Hyde Horticultural Herbarium

BY LAURA ZYBAS AND SARAH REICHARD

Located on the lower level of the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH), directly below the Elisabeth C. Miller Library, is yet another type of horticultural library. It is used for reference, research, plant identification, and storage of voucher specimens from the Washington Park Arboretum and CUH landscape. This often overlooked but amazing resource is the Otis Douglas Hyde Horticultural Herbarium.

Does one grow herbs in a herbarium?

Because the reason for studying plants historically was to discover their medicinal uses, the term “herbarium” originally referred to a book of medicinal plants. In the 1500s an Italian, Luca Ghini, sewed or pasted dried medicinal plants into such a book. This enabled people to study the plants all year long, instead of just during the growing season, and was



◀ Above Left: This specimen of *Dryas octopetala*, a petite member of the Rosaceae family, was collected in Alaska by Lois Prestrud, a Herbarium volunteer.

▲ Top: A flowering quince (*Chaenomeles cathayensis*) fruit from the Arboretum, cut in sections and pressed to reveal its internal structure.

▲ Middle: This specimen, the fruit and leaves of *Magnolia campbellii*, shows how Herbarium specimens are mounted and labeled.

▲ Bottom: Although mounted specimens are frozen for 48 hours before entering the Herbarium, cigarette beetle traps are placed in every cabinet to provide additional insect-damage prevention.

called an “herbarium.” By the mid 1700s Linneaus, botanist and father of modern taxonomy, broadened the term and the purpose of the herbarium using the pressed and dried plant specimens to identify, group and name species. During the last century the practice of leaving the pages of the books unbound and stored on shelves, grouped with related species, became the norm. All herbaria worldwide are now organized like this. This greatly facilitates many types of study—instead of having a few living plants of a species to work with, the herbarium can store hundreds of specimens in the same amount of space. This means that the full range of expression of a species can be studied in an efficient manner.

Herbaria are located throughout the world and serve different purposes depending on their location, size and mission. According to *The Herbarium Handbook* by Bridson and Forman, 1999, a herbarium should be:

- A store of reference material with space for preparation and indexing of specimens.
- A means of identification by matching unnamed plants with named specimens in the collection. Specimens are arranged to show some relation to their overall similarities. Taxonomic arrangements reflect these relationships.
- An arbiter of correct names to verify specimens in their collection. Because printed plant manuals soon become out of date, it is up to the herbarium to keep names in line with current taxonomic work. This also entails organizing exchanges of specimens with other institutions.
- A comprehensive data bank, to fully represent the diversity and distribution of the region's vegetation.

Properly treated and stored, a herbarium specimen may last hundreds of years (though it may not look pretty after that long!) and provide an invaluable historical record.

What is special about the Hyde Horticultural Herbarium?

A Brief History

Today, the Hyde Horticultural Herbarium reflects the diversity of the Washington Park Arboretum and the range of plants that can be grown in this region, but the collec-

tion has been forty years in the making. Although former director Brian Mulligan and former curator Joe Witt occasionally collected specimens of Arboretum plants, there was little done to archive them. In the 1960s a Unit of the Arboretum Foundation was established to begin a real collection. For many years led by Vera Frasier, a primary advocate for the development of the Herbarium, this core group of volunteers (with a few changes over the years) still meets twice a month and contributes greatly to specimen collection and processing. Without their involvement and dedication, a herbarium for the Arboretum would not be here today.

Still, a formal herbarium and curator for the collection were on the Arboretum's wish list. In 1983 Charles H. and Otis Douglas Hyde made a gift to establish a true herbarium. As a result, the Hyde Horticultural Herbarium was developed and opened at the new CUH in 1985. Simultaneously, Dr. Clement Hamilton was hired to lead the Herbarium and direct students in taxonomic research. Under his vision, the Herbarium set out to be one of the premiere horticultural herbaria in the country. When Dr. Hamilton left in 1999, Dr. Sarah Reichard, a former graduate student who had worked to develop the Herbarium in its early years, assumed responsibility as Curator.

The Herbarium's Mission

The primary focus of the Herbarium is to gather voucher specimens of all the accessioned plants in the Arboretum. Having voucher specimens assures that the live trees and shrubs in the Arboretum are always correctly identified. Examining dried specimens is an efficient way to identify plants because a number of individuals can be assessed simultaneously, without having to walk long distances between plants. Sometimes specimens are sent to an expert or institution that can verify that the plants

are correctly identified. Specimens also provide a record of plants that may no longer be in the collection—plants that did not survive a particularly harsh winter or dry summer.

In addition to our primary focus as the voucher collection for the Washington Park Arboretum, we also have special collections including voucher specimens from the garden and grounds around CUH, including the Union Bay Natural Area.

A special feature that is of increasing importance is an extensive collection of Northwest weeds, originally started by volunteer Tom Johnson. Weed spread, identification, and eradication are integral parts of the horticultural world. In fact, at least half of the specimens brought to the herbarium for identification are weeds. In addition to collecting Northwest weeds, we are beginning actively to trade specimens with other herbaria around the country, so that we may have a strong representation of weeds that are not currently in our area, but which may show up eventually.

The Hyde Herbarium currently holds over 14,000 specimens. While this number is impressive, it represents only half of the voucher specimens for all Arboretum plants. Our goal is to have each accession represented in flower, fruit, and in some cases, winter bud. When we collect specimens, we collect duplicates so that we can trade these specimens with other herbaria. These trades ensure that our collection is "backed-up" for safe-keeping and expands our collection with specimens from all over the world. We also send some specimens to taxonomic experts as "gifts for determination," specimens that the recipient can keep in exchange for verifying the identification.

Services to the Community

While our primary function is to voucher the living collection in the Arboretum, we

also provide access and assistance to the larger community. Herbarium staff and Washington State University Master Gardeners help identify plants brought into the garden clinic from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Monday evenings when the public can visit the Herbarium. Plants left at other times will also be identified as time allows. The public, as well as landscape professionals, students and scientists may also use the resources of the Herbarium at other times by making an appointment with the curatorial research assistant.

In addition to the collection, we also curate a 50,000-slide library of horticultural plants and gardens, originated by Dr. John Wott, Director of the Washington Park Arboretum, and augmented by many others. The slides are available for check-out by prior arrangement.

The Otis Douglas Hyde Horticultural Herbarium is a valuable resource that for many years has been quietly developing into something in which the Washington Park Arboretum may take pride. The credit goes primarily to the many students and volunteers who have put in countless hours. They have amassed a body of high quality specimens that will facilitate development of the WPA collection, research, and study for many future students. The plants in the Arboretum may not live forever, but the specimens taken from those plants will live as testimony to the development of a vital collection for many decades to come. ~

From 1999-2000, Laura Zybas was a Curatorial Assistant at the Herbarium. She has recently completed a Master's Degree in Urban Horticulture and a Certificate in Museum Studies.

Sarah Reichard is the Curator of the Herbarium and Research Assistant Professor of Conservation Biology at the University of Washington.

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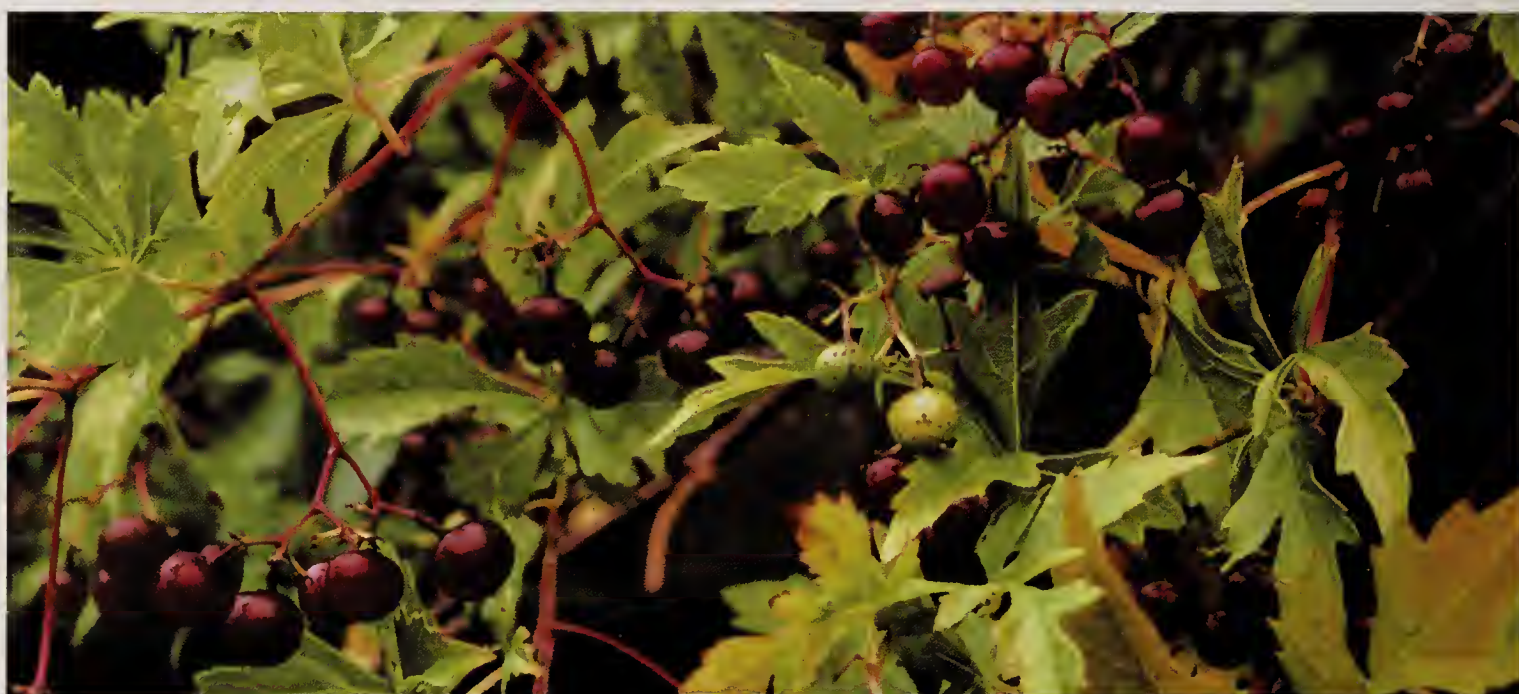
Vines: Choose Wisely!

BY MARTY WINGATE

Although gardeners are often tempted just to assign vines to thug or non-thug categories, it would be fairer to subscribe to the “no bad plants” theory. Inappropriate choices and unthinking actions make plants “bad,” and vines are notorious. Kudzu (*Pueraria lobata*) is a well-behaved deciduous scrambler in its native haunts; it did not plot and plan to take

over the South. For every *Akebia* that swallowed a garage, there is a better choice, and also a better place for the *Akebia*.

Vines are among the most useful garden plants, for they add another dimension to our plantings with textural foliage, fragrant flowers and interesting fruit. They can make a vertical statement, disguise a fence, cover a wall, adorn the branches of a dead apple tree or add



layers and texture by growing on or through the branches of other plants. And, as beautiful and other-worldly as saucer-sized *Clematis* are in June, we can look beyond them to an array of climbers for the garden.

While some vines are fairly self-sufficient, *Parthenocissus* species, such as Boston ivy (*P. tricuspidata*) and Virginia creeper (*P. quinquefolia*) for example, with pads that glue themselves onto whatever structure they encounter; others rely on companions for support, and do the bare minimum to cling to a surface. They may need tying up to actually “climb” over an arbor, which doesn’t have all the leaves and small branches that are such useful aids in a companion plant. So it is best to choose the vine and plan the support together, or your rhododendron may be smothered.

Vines often prefer part shade, because in their natural habitat they grow under, around and through other plants, not on top of the world in full sun. That doesn’t mean that they do well in pure gloom, except perhaps for *Parthenocissus henryana*, the silvervein vine. This vine grows well even on the north, cold, shady side of a building, reaching about 15 feet. Its deciduous foliage colors up well in fall, turning warm tones of scarlet and bright red.

On the light and delicate end of the spectrum, *Billardiera longiflora*, the blueberry vine, grows only six to ten feet. Everything is diminutive about this vine—from its deep green, elliptical leaves, a half-inch wide and one and a half inches long, to the bell-shaped flowers, a yellow-green turning purple. The one-inch long shiny purple fruit is an interesting addition to the purple-fruited vines that include *Akebia* and *Holboellia*. *Billardiera* could scramble through anything without

overwhelming its support — so grow it where its purple fruit can dangle from the bare branches of a deciduous shrub in late fall.

Ampelopsis aconitifolia, the monkshood vine, is a member of the grape family (Vitaceae). It isn’t a rampant grower — reaching 10 to 15 feet, but its foliage is thick, making it look impressively lush. The leaves are divided into three to five pointed lobes giving them a lacy look; they are a fresh, glossy green. The flowers are insignificant but develop into clusters of berries that age from a reddish orange to brown. The plant comes easily from seed, which is another way of saying look out for seedlings that will crop up nearby where fruit is left to fall. *Ampelopsis aconitifolia* has tendrils that will coil around a support, but the vine becomes so heavy with foliage it may also need tying up.

Two related vines, *Stauntonia hexaphylla* and *Holboellia coriacea* (Lardizabalaceae), share the common name of sausage vine, and well named they are. Both develop purple, two-inch long, sausage-shaped fruit from fragrant flowers, but fruit production is unreliable. Their evergreen foliage, trifoliate in *Holboellia* and palmately compound in *Stauntonia*, is thick and leathery, but pliable (the very definition of “coriaceous”), and makes a handsome display in a sheltered spot in sun or part shade. Neither is timid; *Holboellia* can reach 20 feet and *Stauntonia*, 30.

Grapes are not just for eating; two species are popular vines for the ornamental garden. *Vitis vinifera* ‘Purpurea’ has reddish purple six-inch leaves that glow when backlit. The vine may grow to 30 feet, but it can always be kept in check with pruning. *Vitis coignetiae*, the glory vine, has leaves a foot across that burst into flaming color in the fall. This is a

◀ Above: The marble-sized, purple fruit of the well-mannered blueberry vine (*Billardiera longiflora*) may remain on this wiry vine into January.

◀ Below: The deeply dissected leaves and color fruit of the monkshood vine (*Ampelopsis aconitifolia*) provide interest in either full sun or light shade.

This vine has not proved to be invasive in the Northwest as in warmer parts of the country.



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vine to run up the flagpole. In fact, it is vigorous enough to take advantage of a handy Douglas fir trunk.

Back on a smaller scale, *Kadsura japonica*, the magnolia vine, is semi-evergreen and grows from 10 to 15 feet. It's a twiner, and needs a trellis, arbor or stem, something to wind around. It flowers in summer, its yellow blooms coming from the leaf axils and hanging down with overlapping petals. Dioecious, this species needs both male and female plants to set fruit, round clusters of scarlet berries. Foliage is tinted red in winter.

A closely related species, *Schisandra chinensis*, is also dioecious; it has pinkish flowers, and its red fruit is held upright in a spike. *Schisandra chinensis*, also known as the magnolia vine, grows to 20 feet. Another species in the genus, *S. propinqua*, grows up to 30 feet and is monoecious.

The climbing hydrangea, *Hydrangea anomala* ssp. *petiolaris*, is a not uncommon sight in gardens. It is a vigorous, deciduous vine, surrounding the trunks of some of the tallest trees in the Arboretum; in winter, it looks as if the trees have camel-hair coats on. There's a look-alike for the climbing hydrangea, aptly named *Schizophragma hydrangeoides*, meaning "like a hydrangea." But, whereas the climbing hydrangea has a ring of white, sterile flowers with three to four petals around the edge of the lacecap inflorescence, the blossoms of *Schizophragma* have only single petals (actually, sepals).

There is no difference in vigor, however. *Schizophragma* can grow to 45 feet, using aerial root structures similar to the hydrangea. If you choose it for your small garden, be aware that you will need to keep it under control, lest it end up controlling you. ♪

Marty Wingate is a freelance garden writer whose weekly column appears in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. Her first book on small gardens, published by Sasquatch Books, is due out this spring.

BOOK REVIEW

Savoring Native Trees

BY BRIAN THOMPSON

The most memorable books are often those read on vacation. Years ago, while visiting Arizona for the first time, I began reading Donald Culross Peattie's *A Natural History of Western Trees*. What a delight to spend the day exploring a very different flora from that found in the Pacific Northwest. And in the evening, to be equally absorbed in learning the distinguishing features, the lore, and the impact on humans of these native pines, junipers and even saguaros.

The highlight of this synergy was my first encounter with an alligator juniper (*Juniperus deppeana*). Only a day or two before, I had read the colorful story of Dr. Samuel Washington Woodhouse and his perilous attempts to find specimens of this "king of the western Junipers." With my initial sighting of the thick, scaly bark of this magnificent tree in its mountainous environment, it wasn't hard to transport myself back to 1851 and identify with the excitement of that first time collector.

Peattie's style makes you excited to learn about new trees. Even the most humble species get special attention, and for the true royalty of the forests, such as the towering conifers of the West Coast, he positively swells with hyperbole and even whimsy. This

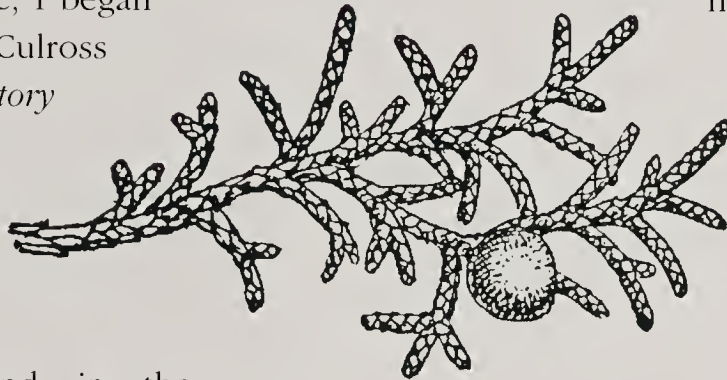
is writing for the true romantic. The sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*) is "the king of Pines, undisputed in its monarchy over all others."

Of the redwood forests, he writes, "Time, the common tick-tock of it, ceases here, and you become aware of time in another measure—out of an awesome past."

First published in 1953, *Western Trees* followed *A Natural History of Trees of Eastern and Central North America* (1950). Unfortunately, an intended third volume on the sylva of the south and southeast was never written. Earlier, the author established himself as naturalist and a writer, using biography, history and even fiction as formats for exploring and sharing his keen interest in plants and those who study them throughout the world.

These books could loosely be called field guides, but I doubt if they are often used that way. For making identifications on the trail, there are better choices. Instead, reserve Peattie for savoring by the fire before or after the trek. He is a master storyteller, whether describing the horrific forest fires of 1910 in the white pine (*Pinus monticola*) forests of Idaho or recounting the homey history of making syrup from sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*).

Peattie is perhaps even better as a teacher. Throughout, he encourages the reader to be



a student so that "as you walk abroad...the trees stand forth, proclaiming their names to you. Though at first you may fix their identity with more or less conscious effort, the easy-to-know species soon become like the faces of your friends, known without thought, and bringing each a host of associations."

Supporting this rich rhetoric is some solid botany reflecting the author's training in the subject at Harvard. Each genus is introduced with a relatively sober description of identifying features. Individual species begin with the accepted scientific name and authority for the time, common names, a detailed description of the botanical characteristics and the known range. This last category was of particular interest to Peattie; his entries are the result of considerable effort to increase the geographic detail over earlier publications. At the back, each volume has a full key for the entries it contains, plus a glossary and indexes by both scientific and common names.

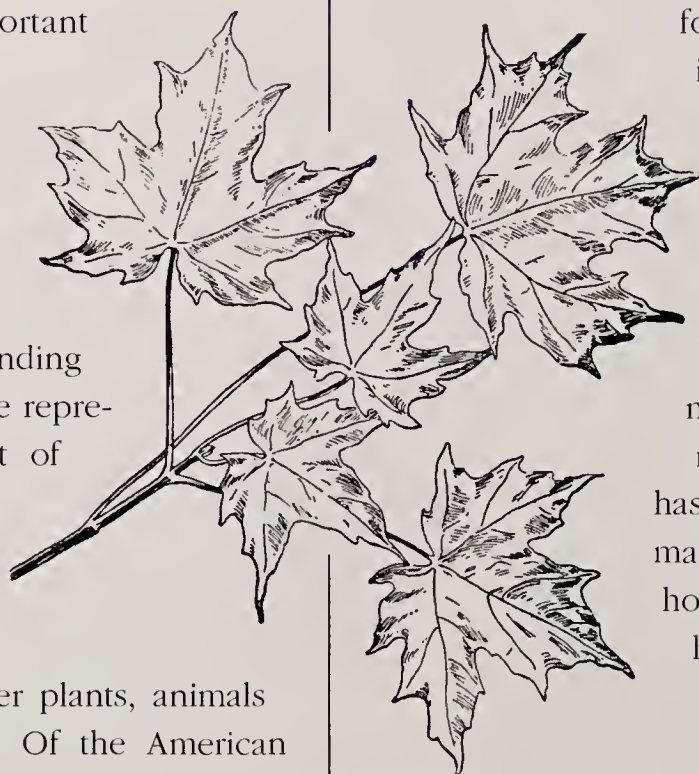
The commercial and traditional uses for the wood and the history of logging practices are an important component of many of the narratives. While issues of conservation may have become more sophisticated since the 1950s, one must read Peattie with an understanding of the time; in this light, he represents a progressive point of view. Perhaps he shows this best in encouraging a deep respect for each species, the importance of each in relation to other plants, animals and the lives of humans. Of the American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) he asserts: "Let other trees do the work of the world. Let the Beech stand, where still it holds its ground,

a monument to past glories. Of these, none is more wholly vanished than the passenger pigeon, to which the Beech played lavish host."

The books have worn well in the half-century since publication. This is partially because they rely on the beautiful woodcuts of Paul Landacre instead of photographs. Typically shown are the leaves and fruits or flowers of each species, with a few full-page images depicting a grove or single mighty specimen in its ideal natural setting. It is perhaps not surprising that such carefully crafted publications would still be in print, albeit in paperback, from Houghton Mifflin Company (Boston: 1991). Earlier editions are available for reading in the Elisabeth C. Miller Library, along with three other books by Peattie.

There are other excellent writings on native trees. A choice alternative for those living in the Pacific Northwest is Stephen F. Arno's *Northwest Trees* (Seattle: The Mountaineers, 1977). Nevertheless, Peattie stands out with a passion for his subject that is infectious. Perhaps this is best captured by his invitation, almost a blessing, at the end of the Foreword to *Western Trees*: "With these more than two hundred native species the author has been preoccupied for many happy years; it is his hope the reader may enjoy his own excursions among them." ~

Brian Thompson is a librarian at The Elisabeth C. Miller Horticultural Library.



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who picked his flowers! Indignant, he stalked off into the nursery. There would be no garden tour on that day.

A Good Place to Live

Hjalmar Larson once said, "If an area grows rhododendrons, it's a good place to live; it's a good place for man. If it doesn't grow rhododendrons, get out of there!" Clearly, the Pacific Northwest is a good place to grow rhododendrons. New hybrids were sometimes almost too prolific.

Once, Bill Whitney liked one of his seedling crosses enough to ask an awards committee to drive from Seattle to Brinnon to view this selected rhododendron. The committee studied it and approved. Mr. Whitney printed out a nametag and attached it to the plant. About ten days later, another seedling from the same cross bloomed, and he realized that it was better. Dilemma...what to do? He did what was expedient. He marched over to the first seedling, removed the plant's nametag, then walked to the new plant. There he hung the tag, and judges, or no judges, the new seedling became *Rhododendron* 'Virginia Richards'.

Halfdan Lem's Legacy

Halfdan Lem was living in Ketchikan, Alaska, in 1912, the same year that Endre Ostbo arrived in America. Commercial fishing provided his income, but his joy came from the struggle to grow ornamental plants. In 1925, a friend gave him an English book about rhododendrons, and by 1934, the Lems had moved themselves and their plants to Seattle and begun a rhododendron nursery. Mr. Lem used to laugh as he tried to describe his experience growing tiny rhododendron seedlings on a fishing boat.

One of Mr. Lem's treasured memories was his presentation of a seedling clone, that he

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BOOK REVIEW

The Encyclopedia of North American Trees

BY RAY LARSON

While there are numerous books that survey the trees grown in North America, relatively few focus only on trees native to the temperate regions of the continent. *The Encyclopedia of North American Trees* by Sam Benvie (Buffalo: Firefly, 2000) is entirely devoted to describing and identifying 278 native tree species. Each species is presented along with information on its range, habit, distinguishing characteristics, economical and traditional uses, wildlife value, and environmental preferences. Trees are listed alphabetically by botanical name, though common names are given and used liberally in descriptions.

North American Landscape Trees is not presented in field guide format, and its large size and conversational tone do not lend it to this purpose. Special attention is given to the uses of each tree for restoration or wildlife purposes. In this aspect it is more detailed than other books of its kind. While aesthetic qualities are mentioned, the author takes care to note that all trees are "worthy of consideration and praise."

Although an author's choice of trees is admittedly subjective, I was surprised not to find our native vine maple (*Acer circinatum*) listed when many other trees of similar stature are included. It seems odd to leave out a tree that is so valued for its ornamental and ecological attributes. However, trees native to the Northwest are featured prominently as a whole.

The most disappointing aspect of the book is the uneven quality of the photographs. While many of the photos are outstanding, some seem fuzzy, and many are poor examples of the habit of the tree in question.

On the whole, this is a useful book. The information is fairly complete and is presented in an enthusiastic style. While not a book for those solely interested in taxonomic or ornamental attributes, it is a fine review of the general features of the native trees of North America and a worthy complement to more traditional surveys.

Ray Larson is the Assistant Facilities Manager and a graduate student at the Center for Urban Horticulture.



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named *Rhododendron* 'King Olav V', to the touring King of Norway when he was visiting the Northwest. The seedling was placed aboard the monarch's plane and taken to Norway where it was installed in the Royal Gardens.

Mr. Lem's favorite rhododendron was his 'Lem's Cameo', appreciated for its apricot/pink flowers and bronzy spring foliage. A few years ago there was a rumor circulating that there was a sister seedling to 'Lem's Cameo' being spread around the state of Oregon. I asked Anna Lem if this were possible. She replied emphatically that it was not. They knew where every plant from that cross went; there were only seven. Three of the seedlings were sold to landscapers absolutely unidentified. The only good clone was registered as 'Lem's Cameo', and the remaining three were so bad they were destroyed.

Rhododendron 'Lem's Cameo' endures. It has contributed much to later hybrids. Using 'Lem's Cameo' as the seed parent has produced 'Chorus Line', 'Flaming Comet', '1000 Butterflies', 'Viennese Waltz' and 'PridenJoy'. Using 'Lem's Cameo' as the pollen parent has contributed to our gardens the stand-out 'Nancy Evans', 'Naselle', 'Primary Pink', 'Butter Brickle' and others.

There is an ongoing parade of hybrid rhododendrons. Enthusiastic hybridizers in the Northwest have been in the thick of it. Isn't it nice to know that members of the RumDum Club, the hybridizers of the generation past, are not yet forgotten! ∞

Gwen Bell has been active in the Seattle Rhododendron Society since 1963 and has been an Arboretum Foundation member for as long as she can remember.

"The Rum Dum Club" is the first in a series of articles about Northwest rhododendron hybridizers and their remarkable work.



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